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INTERNATIONAL | NEWS

Iran's President says negotiation with US does not mean surrender

SPORTS | NEWS

INDIA-PAKISTAN PLAYERS SKIP HANDSHAKES BEFORE MATCH



CINEMA | NEWS

“Killer” release date announcement glimpse raises expectations for the film



SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

19-08-2026
Total pilgrims : 76,464
Tonsures : 36,913
Hundi kamahala : 4,94 CR
Ladies sales : 4,27 Lac
Annaprasadam : 2.63 Lac
Ammi hospital : 3,694
Present Situation on 20-08-2026:
Waiting Compartments...Out side line adding at Shalimararam

Approx. Darsan Time for Saravadarshnam (with out SSD Tolerant): 18-20 H.

Short Takes

5 dead, 20 hospitalised after suspected spurious liquor consumption

Bhavnagar, Aug 20: Five people have died and 20 others are undergoing treatment after allegedly consuming spurious liquor in Kharkhadi village of Ghogha taluka in Gujarat's Bhavnagar district, triggering a major police investigation.

Following the incident, a team of the State Monitoring Cell (SMC) has reached Bhavnagar on the directions of Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister. A Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team has also begun collecting evidence from the suspected site where the liquor was allegedly adulterated.

ED searches nine Kozhikode premises over alleged CMRL money trail

Kozhikode: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Kochi Zone, conducted searches at nine premises in Kozhikode on August 18 in connection with an alleged corporate fraud and money laundering case involving Cochin Minerals and Rutile Limited (CMRL). The searches were carried out under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. According to the ED, the investigation stems from a probe by the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) into alleged corporate fraud and bribe payments linked to CMRL. The ED said its earlier investigation had indicated that proceeds of crime were allegedly generated under the management of CMRL, led by SN Sasidharan Kartha, and that payments were made to various individuals.

4 killed, 7 injured in truck collision inside Hanogi Tunnel

Mandi (TSIT): Four people were killed and seven others injured after two trucks collided head-on inside the Hanogi Tunnel on the Chandigarh-Manali National Highway in Himachal Pradesh on Thursday morning. The accident occurred at around 7:45 am, triggering panic in the area. The impact of the collision was severe, leaving four people dead, while seven others sustained injuries.

Digital coordination key to swift justice under new criminal laws Chief Justice



Hyderabad, TSIT BUREAU:

Telangana High Court Chief Justice Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh on Thursday stressed that effective coordination among all stakeholders and the use of digital platforms are crucial for the successful implementation of the new criminal laws and for ensuring speedy justice to citizens.

Addressing a first-of-its-kind seminar jointly organised by the Telangana State Judicial Academy and Telangana Police Department, the Chief Justice said justice is a collective outcome achieved through coordinated efforts by the police, prosecution, forensic experts, prisons, medical departments and the judiciary. Nearly 1,200 judicial officers and officials from various departments participated in the programme in hybrid mode.

Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh

said every stage, from registration of a crime to investigation, forensic examination, prosecution and trial, plays a critical role in the justice delivery system. He called for continuous coordination among institutions and greater use of technology to make justice faster, transparent and accessible.

Telangana State Judicial Academy Chairperson Justice Moushumi Bhattacharya highlighted the need for better inter-departmental coordination and improved digital literacy among officials. She noted that incomplete data entry, coding errors and repeated information entry often lead to delays in case processing and prosecution review.

Director General of Police C.V. Anand said the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita

(BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) represent a comprehensive shift towards citizen-centric justice, scientific investigation and digital evidence-based policing. He emphasised accurate digital documentation, timely investigations and effective use of available technological platforms.

Technical sessions during the seminar focused on the Integrated Criminal Justice System (ICJS), e-Sakshya, online FIRs and charge sheets, e-summons, video-conference recording of evidence, investigation timelines, forensic and medical integration, prison management and coordination between investigation and prosecution agencies.

DGP Anand also proposed the creation of a coordination mechanism under the chairmanship of a High Court judge to review the implementation of the new criminal laws on a monthly basis.

The seminar was attended by High Court judges Justice Vijaysen Reddy and Justice Madhavi Devi, NCRB representative Prasun Gupta, TGSFCL Director Shikha Goel, Prisons DG Soumya Mishra, Judicial Academy Principal Sridevi, CDTI Director Salman Taj, senior police officers and officials from various departments.

Shivakumar seeks freeze on Lok Sabha seats

MAHABALIPURAM: Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Thursday urged the Southern Zonal Council to adopt a resolution seeking to retain the Lok Sabha's existing 543 seats for the next 25 years and use the 1971 Census as the basis for delimitation.

Addressing the 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council, Shivakumar said southern states should not be politically disadvantaged for successfully implementing population-control measures. He said the South's economic contribution and achievements in population stabilisation must be matched by adequate political representation. "We welcome the assurance that no southern state will lose seats. But representation is not only about numbers. It is about weight and voice," he said.

Shivakumar called for the 1971 population basis to be honoured during delimitation and urged the Union government to maintain the existing strength of 543 Lok Sabha seats. He also



proposed that women's reservation be accommodated within the existing number of seats rather than waiting for a fresh delimitation exercise.

"Women have waited long enough for their rightful representation," he said, stressing that their reservation should not be delayed.

The Chief Minister appealed to other southern Chief Ministers to support the proposal, saying protection of the region's political voice was essential to maintaining fairness in India's federal structure. He also linked political representation with equitable distribution of resources.

Omar Abdullah calls US-Pakistan row a bilateral matter



SRINAGAR (TSIT): Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said the dispute between the United States and Pakistan over remarks by US Ambassador to India Sergio

Gor was a matter between the two countries. Abdullah was responding to Pakistan's decision to summon the US envoy in Islamabad and lodge a formal protest over Gor's remarks during his recent visit to Jammu and Kashmir. Gor had described Kashmir as an important part of India and indicated that the United States would reconsider its travel advisories concerning the region. "Whatever the US ambassador said, he said. Now it is between the two countries," Abdullah said.

CM Vijay urges Centre, neighbouring States to follow SC verdict on Cauvery

The Supreme Court on August 17 had directed the Karnataka government to comply with the Cauvery Water Management Authority's (CWMA) directions on releasing water to Tamil Nadu and sought a status report on the releases.

CHENNAI (TSIT):

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay on Thursday urged the Centre and neighbouring States to implement the Supreme Court's verdict on the Cauvery water dispute and ensure that decisions of the Cauvery Water Management Authority are followed.

Addressing the 31st Southern Zonal Council meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Kovalam near Mamallapuram, Vijay said Tamil Nadu's river-water rights must be protected



and the rights of downstream States should be safeguarded, according to a Daily Thanthi report. The Supreme Court on August 17 had directed the Karnataka government to

comply with the Cauvery Water Management Authority's (CWMA) directions on releasing water to Tamil Nadu and sought a status report on the releases. The Cauvery Water

Regulation Committee (CWRC) had directed Karnataka to release 12,000 cusecs of water daily to Tamil Nadu for 15 days from August 12. The CWMA subsequently upheld the decision.

Vijay seeks NEET exemption, fair share of funds. Vijay also reiterated Tamil Nadu's demand for exemption from the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), saying the examination affects poor and rural students seeking admission to medical courses.

Massive search operation by Navy, Coast Guard for seven missing Andhra fishermen

Amaravati (TSIT) : A massive search operation was underway in the Bay of Bengal for seven fishermen from Andhra Pradesh who had set out to sea earlier this month, officials said on Thursday. Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu said the search operation involves two Dornier aircraft, a helicopter, and seven boats of the Navy and the Coast Guard. He said Navy boats were deployed for extensive search from Visakhapatnam towards Paradip. A Navy vessel is also searching towards the port area. Dornier aircraft from Visakhapatnam, Kolkata, and Chennai were engaged in the search operation.

CJP protests: Former SC judge R Subhash Reddy to head 5-member panel to probe alleged police excesses

Other members include former Punjab and Haryana HC Chief Justice Ravi Shankar Jha, former Delhi HC Judge Shalinder Kaur, former CBI Director Rishi Shukla and ex-Meghalaya DGP L.R. Bishnoi

New Delhi (TSIT) The Supreme Court has set up a five-member High-Powered Enquiry Committee (HPEC) headed by former top court judge Justice R. Subhash Reddy to look into alleged police excesses against student protesters and violence against police personnel during the CJP protests here last month.

The other members of the panel are former Punjab and Haryana High Court Chief Justice Ravi Shankar Jha, former Delhi High Court Judge Shalinder Kaur, former CBI director Rishi Kumar Shukla and ex-Meghalaya DGP L.R. Bishnoi.

An order to this effect passed by a Bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice V Mohana passed on August 18 was made public by the top court on Thursday. The committee will examine use of excessive force and violence against protesters by the police, including the deployment of pellet guns, as well as the alleged use of force and violence by protesters



against police officials and other security personnel and damage caused to public and private property. The points of reference also included "the desirability of banning the use of metallic kinetic projectiles or pellets fired from pump-action rifles or projectile-action guns, having regard to the grave and, at times,

irreversible bodily harm occasioned by their deployment against protesters" and "the necessity of ensuring that police and security personnel wear proper uniforms and visible nameplates at the time of effecting arrests or using force during crowd-control operations, so as to secure accountability and enable the identi-

fication of individual officers."

The panel will also examine the allegations pertaining to the monitoring and surveillance of protesters by police personnel, and the extent to which such measures, if undertaken, were consistent with the protesters' constitutional rights to privacy and free assembly as also the provision of medical and other requisite support, including award of compensation, to victims of alleged police abuse, including the manner and adequacy of such support extended thus far. The injuries sustained by the police forces in the course of discharging their duties, as well as the consequent mental and emotional trauma borne by their kith and kin merits due recognition and consideration on a par with the grievances raised by the Petitioners shall also be examined. The order came on petitions seeking an impartial probe into the alleged disproportionate use of police force against protesters at Jantar Mantar and other locations across India.

Anirikshitha
Athithigalu cinema with
unexpected songs!

Bangalore: The name of the movie is Anirikshitha Athithigalu. While the name of the movie has nothing to do with crime fiction, the songs have come out in a way that creates even more curiosity.

At the press conference for the release of the songs, it was also shared that the movie will be released next month, on September 18. This movie, which has six main characters, is directed by new director Manoj Annaiah. There are 4 main songs in this movie, produced by B Vinod Kumar.

A lyrical song has been released with music by Swaminathan R.K and is already making a splash. Its video was shown on the



screen. Another pop song has been sung wonderfully by singer Sirikatte. The song is entirely in English. But it is a song that suits the occasion, said director Manoj Annaiah.

Birth anniversaries of Rajiv Gandhi, and former
Chief Minister D. Devaraj Urs, celebrated with
visually impaired children

Bengaluru: KPCC General Secretary S. Manohar recalled the visionary leadership of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and his immense contribution to building modern India.

Celebrating The birth anniversaries of Bharat Ratna, former Prime Minister Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, and former Karnataka Chief Minister and champion of the poor, Late Shri D. Devaraj Urs, with visually impaired children.

Speaking on the occasion, Rajiv Gandhi made significant contributions towards the modernisation of the technology and telecommunications sectors in the country and provided a new direction for the devel-



opment of India's youth and its future. His visionary initiatives were truly transformative and played an important role in shaping a modern India, he said. He also highlighted that Rajiv Gandhi reduced the voting age from 21 to 18 years, thereby enabling millions of young Indians to participate in the demo-

cratic process through the electoral system. S. Manohar also remembered former Karnataka Chief Minister Late Shri D. Devaraj Urs as a great progressive and socially committed leader who worked tirelessly for the social and economic empowerment of Backward Classes, Dalits and the poor.

Don't cross upper limit of 9 SIMs
per customer, govt tells telcos

New Delhi, Aug 20 : The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed the telecom companies to strictly enforce the rule of not issuing a new mobile phone connection to any subscriber already having nine SIMs, an official statement said on Thursday.

"From August 24, 2026, onward, TSPs (telecom service providers) shall take appropriate technical and organisational measures to identify each subscriber who seeks to obtain mobile connections beyond the prescribed limit and communicate to him that he already has a maximum number of mobile connections permitted to an individual and accordingly, a new mobile connection cannot



be provided to him," the circular states.

The directions also require customers to provide a declaration in the Customer Application Form (CAF) regarding the mobile connections already held in their name across telecom operators and licensed service areas. DoT said the respective Licensed Service Areas (LSAs) will be the competent authorities to decide issues arising from the implementation of the instructions.

The DoT circular points

out that the details of subscribers who have already obtained mobile connections beyond the prescribed limit are available on its Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP).

DoT has also put in place a mechanism to help telecom operators identify such subscribers. From August 23, a representative image of the photo of each subscriber who has already reached the prescribed limit for mobile connections in their name will be made available on the DIP. The DIP uses subscriber information submitted by various telecom companies. This information is available for the telcos to identify subscribers who have already reached the upper limit of 9 SIM cards.



Former BBMP Councillor Dr. S. Raju congratulated Rajya Sabha member Prof. M. Nagaraj, who was elected as the National Vice President of BJP, at the state BJP office.

8-year-old Yuti B. who brought glory
to the country by winning the World
Junior Tourism Ambassador award

VIETNAM: 8-year-old Yuti B has brought glory to the whole of India by becoming the runner-up in the World Junior Tourism Ambassador-2026 competition held in Vietnam.

Yuti B, the daughter of Basavaprasad and Mrs. Lakshmi Devi Basavaprasad, Bangalore, is a 3rd class student at Purnaprajna Education Institute and has been awarded the World Junior Ambassador Award runner-up award held in Vietnam.

An avid gymnast, dancer and model, Atul Suresh of Atul Academy and Joseph Sonia have been very supportive, says Yuti.B.

Yuti B said that India's tourism should be promoted in the world, foreigners should know our country, history, literature,

culture, art and Indian way of



life. It is the wish of the student. About 40 talented delegates from 15 countries participated in which I am proud of my country India that I competed from India and became the runner-up winner, she said.

Karnataka Biofuel Development Board Chairman
S.E. Sudhindra meets Minister Eshwar Khandre and
discusses approval of new biofuel policy

Bengaluru: Karnataka Biofuel Development Board Chairman S.E. Sudhindra met Minister Eshwar Khandre and discussed the approval of the proposed new biofuel policy submitted to the government and the provision of necessary funds.

He said that the demand for approval of the new biofuel policy by the Board Chairman would be brought to the government's attention and the next agenda would be released.

Congratulating the Minister for the positive response, Sudhindra expressed his gratitude for suggesting that the Board formulate more work plans under his guidance and request the Department for



more funds to be ready for action.

On the occasion of "International Biofuel Day", an important day for the bio-fuel sector, he submitted a report on his 10-day tour to the United States from August 01 to the Minister.

During the tour, he briefed

the Minister about the visit of the High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom at the London airport, meetings with Maryland Governor Wes Moore and Lieutenant Governor Arun Miller, a visit to the Consulate General of India office, and discussions with NRIs on skill develop-

Struggle against Minister Nagendra will continue; rights of
224 MLAs are being denied: Opposition Leader R. Ashoka

Bengaluru : We will continue the struggle until Minister B. Nagendra, who swallowed the funds of the Valmiki Development Corporation, resigns. For the sake of one minister, the rights of 224 MLAs are being denied, said Opposition Leader R. Ashoka.

Speaking in the House, he said: "We have continued the dharna even on the fourth day. Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara, speaking on this matter in the House, claimed there is no case. But there are 24 charge sheets against him. Parameshwara is giving false information to the House. I have the complete records of the cases against Minister Nagendra, and I will even provide the numbers." The wife of the officer P. Chandrasekharan, who committed suicide, has neither been given a pension nor a job. But



Nagendra has been given a ministerial post. If the government has any self-respect, it should declare a drought. There is no need for discussion before that. The government itself has not accepted that there is a drought. The government should say how much money it is giving for drought and how much it has given for drinking water. There is no point in discussing drought without releasing even a single paisa of relief, he said.

Protection in the name

of Dalits

Speaking to reporters outside the House, he said: "The Rs.187 crore of the Valmiki Development Corporation belongs to Dalits. Minister Nagendra is trying to seek protection in the name of Dalits. But the corporation's entire funds belong to Dalits. The Congress government has to decide whether it wants crores of Dalits or one Nagendra. Crores of poor Dalits are waiting to build houses and take loans. The minister's resignation

must be obtained for the sake of such poor people."

Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara has lied by saying that Minister Nagendra's name is not in the CBI charge sheet. If that is the case, why was the Governor's permission sought for the investigation? We need to discuss issues such as drought, the KPSC scam, and pending pensions. For the sake of one minister, the rights of 224 MLAs are being snatched. Immediately obtain the minister's resignation and give an opportunity to begin the discussion, he demanded.

The BJP did not write the Vande Mataram song. Freedom fighters used to fully sing the Vande Mataram song written by the freedom fighter Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. It was a great inspiration for the youth of that time.

Bhavishya Belaku Charitable
Trust Chairman discusses
'Vidyanjali' scheme with MLA
Allama Prabhu Patil



Kalaburagi: Girish Nalkudri, Chairman of Bhavishya Belaku Charitable Trust, met Allama Prabhu Patil, MLA of Kalaburagi South constituency, and had a long and meaningful discussion on the 'Vidyanjali' scheme, which is complementary to the development of the education sector.

During this meeting, discussions were held on the effective implementation of the 'Vidyanjali' scheme to strengthen government schools, improve infrastructure, and provide quality education and support to students.

Speaking on the occasion, Trust Chairman Girish Nalkudri said, "The main objective of our trust is to provide appropriate encouragement to the education sector and create a good learning environment for every child in the society."

Massive protest by Union of Karnataka quarry
and stone crusher owners association at
Freedom Park: Over 5,000 people participate

Bengaluru : A massive protest was held at Freedom Park in the city on Thursday under the leadership of the Union, of Karnataka quarry and stone crusher owners association, demanding the government to fulfill various demands, including immediately stopping the collection of capital from quarry and crusher owners on both sides, and to abandon its dual policy.

More than 5,000 quarry and crusher owners, workers and industry representatives participated in the protest across the state and expressed their anger against the government. Former Deputy Chief Minister Dr. C.N. Ashwath Narayan, former minister Gopalaiiah, Congress MLA Ivan D'Souza and more than ten MLAs met the protesters.

Speaking after accepting the appeal from the protesters, Mines and Earth Sciences Minister S.S. Mallikarjun said, "We will discuss the issue of collecting capital from both sides and take an appropriate decision. A give-and-take policy is necessary between the government and the union. The government is not at fault here. Workers should not be inconvenienced due to loopholes. Let us all come together and thoroughly examine the matter and take an appropriate decision so that there is no injustice to the government and the union." He said that he will discuss the second notice given to



the owners with the departmental secretaries and chief secretaries.

The previous government had imposed five times the tax on the quarry sector. But our government has formed a committee and reduced the tax. We have their full cooperation to resolve the problems.

I will discuss with Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar. The government is committed to finding a solution to all the problems at once. All the work has reduced. Sales have decreased. Many people are dependent on quarrying. I will also discuss the withdrawal of the notice given to you, said Minister S.S. Mallikarjun.

Karnataka State Quarry and Crusher Owners Association President D. Siddharaju said that it is completely unfair that the quarry and crusher industry, which is operating legally, is being collected twice for capital gains. Gravel and M-sand, which are required for the development of the state and the country, are being produced legally with the permission of all the relevant departments, including the environment department.

Lifelong learning may cut dementia risk by nearly 40%, study finds

New York, Reading, writing and learning new languages throughout life could reduce the risk of dementia by nearly 40%, according to a new study that suggests millions of people may be able to delay or even prevent the condition through sustained mental activity. Dementia is among the world's fastest-growing health challenges, with the number of people living with the condition projected to triple to more than 150 million globally by 2050. Experts warn that it poses a major and escalating burden on health and social care systems worldwide.

Researchers in the United States found that individuals who consistently engaged in intellectually stimulating activities — such as reading books, writing, visiting libraries or learning a foreign language — were less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia, and experienced slower cognitive decline. The study, led by Andrea Zammit of Rush University Medical Center in



Chicago, suggests that cognitive health in later life is "strongly influenced" by lifelong exposure to mentally enriching environments.

"Our findings are encouraging, suggesting that consistently engaging in a variety of mentally stimulating activities throughout life may make a difference in cognition," Zammit said. She added that public investments in early education pro-

grammes and access to libraries could play a significant role in reducing dementia incidence. The study tracked 1,939 participants with an average age of 80 who did not have dementia at the outset. They were followed for an average of eight years and completed surveys about cognitive activities during childhood, midlife and later years. Early-life enrichment —

before age 18 — included being read to, reading books, access to newspapers and atlases at home and learning a foreign language for more than five years. Midlife enrichment involved income level at age 40, access to resources such as magazines, dictionaries and library cards, and cultural activities like visiting museums. Later-life enrichment, beginning at around age 80, included reading, writing, playing games and financial stability. During the study period, 551 participants developed Alzheimer's disease and 719 developed mild cognitive impairment (MCI), an early stage of memory loss. Among those in the highest 10% for lifetime cognitive enrichment, 21% developed Alzheimer's disease, compared with 34% in the lowest 10%. After adjusting for factors such as age, sex and education, researchers found that higher lifetime enrichment was associated with a 38% lower risk of Alzheimer's disease and a 36% lower risk of MCI.

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POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)		
(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)		
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Bajaj Finance Limited (BFL), under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Sec.13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand by registered post ("Notice") calling upon the Borrowers/Co-borrowers mentioned hereunder to repay the amount mentioned in the notice U/S 13(2) of the said Act within a period of 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.		
The Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors named below having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors and public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Sec.13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.		
The borrowers in particular and public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the said property and any dealing with this property will be subject to the charge of the Bajaj Finance Limited, for the amount mentioned herein below along with interest thereon at contracted rate.		
The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.		
Loan Account No./Name of the Borrower(s)Mortgagor(s) Guarantor(s)	Description of Secured Immovable Property	Date of Notice U/S 13(2) and U/S 13(2) Notice Amount
		Date of Possession
436LAP29000143 MAYURA TRADING CO. (BORROWER) (Represented by its Proprietor/ Authorised Signatory/ Managing Director) MR. CHACKO CHINNAKUTTY, AT:- BUILDING NO. 13/338 CHOWANNUR, KUNNAMKULAM THIRISSUR - 680517, ALSO AT:- CHUNGATH HOUSE, CHOWANNUR P.O. KUNNAMKULAM, THIRISSUR - 680517. CHACKO CHINNAKUTTY (CO-BORROWER), AT:- CHUNGATH HOUSE, CHOWANNUR P.O. KUNNAMKULAM, THIRISSUR - 680517, LIGY CHUNGATH (LEGAL HEIR OF LATE LEENA CHINNAKUTTY CO-BORROWER), AT:- CHUNGATH HOUSE, CHOWANNUR P.O. KUNNAMKULAM, THIRISSUR - 680517, GINI CHUNGATH (LEGAL HEIR OF LATE LEENA CHINNAKUTTY CO-BORROWER) REPRESENTED BY LEGAL GARDIAN MR. CHACKO CHINNAKUTTY, AT:- CHUNGATH HOUSE, CHOWANNUR P.O. KUNNAMKULAM, THIRISSUR - 680517, GEEVARGHESE CHUNGATH (LEGAL HEIR OF LATE LEENA CHINNAKUTTY) (CO-BORROWER) REPRESENTED BY LEGAL GARDIAN MR. CHACKO CHINNAKUTTY, AT:- CHUNGATH HOUSE, CHOWANNUR P.O. KUNNAMKULAM, THIRISSUR - 680517	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF 4.40 ARES (10.87 CENTS) IN RE. SY. NO. 152/11 IN BLOCK NO. 12 (OLD SY. NO. 715/PART) OF CHOWANNUR VILLAGE, THALAPALLY TALUK, THIRISSUR DISTRICT ALONG WITH BUILDING BEARING DOOR NO. 13/339, BOUNDED AS FOLLOWS: EAST: PROPERTY OF KOCHUNNI CHUNAKATH, NORTH: ROAD, WEST: PROPERTY OF ANNAMMA CHUNAKATH, SOUTH: WAY.	13/05/2026 & Rs.67,56,265/- (Rupees Sixty-Seven Lakh Fifty-Six Thousand Two Hundred and Sixty-Five Only) as on 05/05/2026
		POSSESSION DATE 18/08/2026
Date - 18.08.2026, Place - Thrissur		
Authorized Officer, For M/s BAJAJ FINANCE LIMITED		

EDITORIAL

India's UPI Miracle Has Created A Difficult, Rs 20,000-Crore Question

Parliament has reopened a question that the country thought was settled: should UPI ever charge? On August 6, the Lok Sabha passed the Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, by a voice vote, and on August 10, the Rajya Sabha, since this is a Money Bill, returned it after discussion, completing the process. It now goes to the President for assent. The change reads small on paper and large in effect. It amends Section 10A of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, which until now shielded UPI and RuPay debit from any charge because they were prescribed under the Income-Tax Act. That automatic shield is gone. From here, whether a payment mode stays free depends on what the government chooses to notify. The case for charging begins, reasonably enough, with a bill nobody disputes. Running the world's largest real-time payment network is not free. Every tap that looks instant sets off authorisation, settlement, reconciliation, fraud screening, dispute handling, cloud capacity, and round-the-clock monitoring, and all of it costs money. One estimate puts the yearly cost of running UPI and RuPay debit infrastructure as high as ₹20,000 crore. As volumes keep climbing - July 2026 alone saw 2,366 crore transactions worth ₹29.9 lakh crore - that bill only grows. So the question the new law opens is fair: if security and a coming wave of AI need real investment, must UPI finally charge? Right Problems, Wrong Solutions The costs behind all this are not imaginary. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) chief has said AI will define UPI's next chapter, taking it from about 750 million daily transactions towards a billion, onboarding half a billion more users, and hunting the mule accounts that already run into lakhs of cases a year. Voice onboarding in many languages, models trained on financial data, and real-time fraud engines are not cheap, and all of it needs steady funding. The RBI Governor has put the question plainly: who, in the end, pays for the plumbing? It helps to recall how that plumbing was paid for, because "free" never meant "unfunded". UPI was built and run by NPCI as public infrastructure, not a profit centre, and its scaling and security were financed the way a public good is: from the exchequer. The government reimbursed banks through an incentive scheme, ₹1,389 crore in 2021-22 and a peak of ₹3,631 crore in 2023-24, paying 0.15% on low-value merchant payments. That model carried UPI from a standing start in 2016 to accounting for nearly half of all real-time payments on the planet. The strain is that this public funding has thinned even as the network has swelled. The Standing Committee on Finance found that incentive payouts of ₹8,730 crore over four years to 2024-25 covered barely 11% of the industry's cost. The 2026-27 budget set aside ₹2,000 crore, less than before, even as daily volumes touch record highs. So banks and processors now carry a rising share of a growing bill, and want durable revenue, not a subsidy that shrinks each year. Where It Hurts The Most And yet, the leap from "the costs are real" to "therefore charge each transaction" skips the harder question of design. Most of what UPI spends on is fixed, infrastructural cost, not something that rises neatly with each ₹40 payment to a vegetable seller. A per-transaction fee is a blunt tool for a largely fixed bill. Worse, it lands where it does the most damage: at the point of acceptance, on the smallest sellers, whose whole reason to accept digital money was that it cost nothing.

Manmohan Singh, Bachchans, And Other Secrets Of 10 Janpath: The Sonia Gandhi Story

Political memoirs are often written twice: first by memory, then by self-preservation. The best ones resist the temptation of the second. In this context, Sonia Gandhi's forthcoming memoir, titled *Belonging: A Journey of Love* and to be published by Alfred A. Knopf on November 10, comes with an unusual burden of expectation. At 544 pages, the memoir promises to travel from her childhood in post-war Italy and her meeting with Rajiv Gandhi in Cambridge to life inside India's first political family, the assassinations of Indira and Rajiv Gandhi, her reluctant entry into politics, and her years at the helm of the Congress. Sonia herself says she wants to reach the motivations, actions, and "very human failings" of a family about which much has been written. Few Indian politicians have wielded so much influence while revealing so little of themselves. Sonia has been the Congress president, Leader of the Opposition, UPA chairperson, National Advisory Council chairperson, and, for ten years, the political pole around which a coalition government revolved. Yet, we know surprisingly little about how she understood her own power. In the mouths and pens of others, Sonia Gandhi's story is usually compressed into one convenient word: dynasty. But dynasty alone does not explain it. She did not grow up inside the Congress, inherit its political vocabulary, or possess unquestioned legitimacy within it. She entered that world through Rajiv Gandhi and, after losing him, had to negotiate it herself. Over the years, she had to fight, win, cajole, reconcile, absorb rebellion, and repeatedly act as matriarch to a party whose veterans were often older, more experienced, and more rooted in politics than she was. *Belonging* has an opportunity to tell us how she did it. Before *Politics Came Family* The early chapters may prove among the



most revealing precisely because Sonia Gandhi was not born into politics. Politics came looking for her. The geographical arc itself is remarkable: from Orbassano, the comune near Turin where she grew up, to Cambridge; from marriage into the Nehru-Gandhi household to 1 Safdarjung Road, 10 Janpath, and eventually the very centre of Indian power. But the more interesting journey is psychological. At what point did a woman who fiercely guarded her private life begin to regard stewardship of the Congress almost as a familial obligation? She arrived in India as Sonia Maino, married Rajiv in 1968, and entered a household where the private and the political were almost impossible to separate. The publisher's account makes clear that Sanjay Gandhi's death in the 1980 plane crash - and Rajiv's subsequent movement towards politics - will be central to the story. Sonia had herself written of resisting Rajiv's entry with extraordinary intensity, saying she had "fought like a tigress" for their family and their freedom. But *Belonging* can take us further. What exactly were Sonia's relations with Sanjay? How

did she view his enormous influence over Indira Gandhi? Did she merely fear politics for Rajiv, or did she have reservations about the political culture he was inheriting? The Bachchan Saga And then there are the Bachchans. Amitabh Bachchan was not simply another celebrity friend of Rajiv Gandhi. The two families were once extremely close, and Amitabh entered electoral politics in 1984 as Rajiv's friend, winning Allahabad spectacularly. Yet, over time, the friendship disintegrated. What happened? Was the rupture political, financial, personal - or an accumulation of all three? A memoir called *Belonging* cannot entirely avoid the story of people who once belonged almost to the family and then abruptly did not. Nor can an account of Sonia's political evolution easily bypass 1998-99. Her arrival at the top of the Congress was hardly a coronation without resistance. What did she really make of Sitaram Kesri and the circumstances in which she replaced him? Then came a much more personal challenge. In 1999, Sharad Pawar, PA Sangma, and Tariq Anwar questioned her suitability for the highest

office on grounds of her foreign origin - from within the Congress itself. Sonia resigned as party president; the organisation rallied behind her; the rebels were expelled and went on to establish the NCP. It was a defining test of authority. How did she experience it: as humiliation, betrayal, political challenge, or proof that she had finally acquired a constituency of her own? Political memoirs by powerful women - from Golda Meir and Margaret Thatcher to Benazir Bhutto and, more recently, Jacinda Ardern - become historically valuable when they reveal the human calculations beneath public decisions. Sonia's life contains more than enough for a compelling personal narrative. The question is whether she will stop at that fascinating human story - or open the political files as well. Rao, Natwar, And Trust The most intriguing political relationship to revisit may well be Sonia Gandhi's with PV Narasimha Rao. Rao was no outsider to the Gandhi establishment. He had served Indira and Rajiv, and, after Rajiv's assassination, emerged as Congress President and Prime

Minister. Yet Sonia and Rao went from a relationship of trust to an estrangement that became one of the defining internal conflicts of the Congress in the 1990s. Why? One answer has long centred on Sonia's dissatisfaction with the investigation into Rajiv Gandhi's assassination. Accounts from Congress figures say she felt the probe was moving too slowly and suspected that the full conspiracy had not been uncovered; she publicly expressed unhappiness in 1995. Her memoir should tell us what she actually believed. The Rajiv assassination itself deserves a fuller reckoning. The LTTE's responsibility for the killing was established through investigation and trial, but Sonia's reported dissatisfaction went beyond the immediate perpetrators. What did she believe remained unresolved? Then comes Natwar Singh, another relationship where affection hardened into hostility. Natwar was more than a foreign-policy adviser. A diplomat, writer, Nehru-Gandhi loyalist, and bibliophile, he belonged to Sonia's intellectual and political circle and often functioned as an informal literary counsellor

as well. The rupture followed his exit from government amid the UN Oil-for-Food controversy, after which his memoir *One Life Is Not Enough* offered an unflattering account of Sonia and disputed her version of why she declined the Prime Ministership in 2004. = What turned intimacy into permanent estrangement? Sonia has so far largely allowed Natwar's version to stand unanswered. Now she has her turn. The Mannohan Mystery When it comes to Sonia's powerplays, nothing will be scrutinised more closely than 2004, and why she chose Manmohan Singh. Once Sonia decided not to become Prime Minister, the choice of the leader was hers. Pranab Mukherjee was senior, vastly more experienced politically and, by Manmohan's own admission, had reason to feel aggrieved. Arjun Singh, too, represented an older Congress order with considerable organisational weight. Was Manmohan chosen because Sonia trusted him? Because he had no faction? Because his integrity and economic credentials reassured India and the world? Or because he was the rare leader who could exercise governmental authority without creating an alternative political centre inside the Congress? There is an intriguing counterfactual. Madhavrao Scindia, who died in a plane crash in 2001 at only 56, had been widely regarded as prime-ministerial material and was effectively Sonia's deputy in the Parliamentary party. Had Madhavrao lived, would Manmohan Singh still have been Sonia's choice in 2004? Her answer would tell us much about how she understood leadership. So would also her account of the UPA arrangement. Critics described her as a "super PM"; admirers argued that the division was perfectly legitimate - Manmohan ran the government while Sonia managed the coalition, party, and political mandate.

HARASSMENT OF GIRL STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS

-Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

(Crisis of trust in the temple of education)

Schools are not just places for learning. They lay the foundation for children's personality development, values, discipline, and a secure future. When parents send their children to school, they trust that teachers will not only impart knowledge but also ensure their child's safety and dignity. But when, under the guise of this trust, a teacher molests, behaves inappropriately, or sexually harasses a student, it's not just the child who suffers the consequences; the entire educational system is put on trial. Reports of inappropriate behavior by teachers toward female students in schools have surfaced from time to time. The nature and facts of each incident may be different, so it's unfair to blame someone based solely on an allegation. However, suppressing a complaint once it's made, attempting to silence the girl, or delaying the matter to protect the institution's reputation is an even more serious problem. The reputation of any school cannot be more important than the safety of its children. The relationship between a teacher and a student is fundamentally based on trust. A teacher possesses both knowledge and authority. Students naturally value their teacher's words and often consider them the most trustworthy adult after their parents. This is why, if a teacher abuses this trust and

authority, it is difficult for a child to protest. During adolescence, children often cannot discern whether an adult's behavior is normal or inappropriate. Fear, shame, social pressure, worries about exams and the future, and the fear of whether their voice will be believed can prevent them from complaining. Therefore, simply asking, "Why didn't the child complain earlier?" is not enough. The real question should be: Has the school created a safe environment where the child can speak out without fear? The most dangerous element in such cases is often silence. Many families, fearing social stigma, are reluctant to complain. Some suppress the matter, fearing that the child's education will be affected. School administrations, too, may sometimes try to resolve the complaint internally, fearing a tarnished image of the institution. However, such silence can encourage abuse. If a child's complaint is not taken seriously, it can send the message that the institution's reputation is more important than her safety. This message is deeply concerning for any civilized society. Therefore, parents, teachers, and school management must understand that filing a complaint is not a disgrace, but a step toward safety. Allegations should be investigated impartially, and if proven guilty, action should be taken in accordance with the law and institutional rules. The role of school administration should not be limited to taking action after an incident occurs. Security arrangements

should be robust in advance. Proper verification of teachers and staff, a clear code of conduct, rules for dealing with students, and a secure complaint system are essential. Schools should educate children about appropriate and inappropriate touch, how to recognize uncomfortable behavior, and how to report it to a trusted adult. This education should be provided not only to female students, but to all children. They should also be made aware that they are not responsible for any inappropriate behavior. Schools should have a complaint system where children can express their concerns without fear. The availability of female teachers, trained counselors, or other trusted adults can be crucial in this regard. The POCSO Act, 2012, exists in India to protect children from sexual offenses. This law provides important protections in cases of sexual offenses against children under the age of 18. Schools and their staff must have a basic understanding of this law. It is not appropriate to suppress a serious complaint simply by considering it an "internal school matter." Depending on the nature of the case, it may be necessary to inform and cooperate with the appropriate authorities. The purpose of the legal process is not only to punish the accused, but also to protect the safety, dignity, and rights of the victimized child. Even today, after such incidents, questions are often raised in society about a girl's behavior, clothing, time, friendships, or social media activities. This thinking is

wrong and harmful. A girl's clothing, her conversation, or her trust in a teacher does not give an adult the right to behave inappropriately. The responsibility lies with the person who abuses their position, age, and authority. Instead of scaring girls in the name of safety, they must be given confidence. They must be assured that if someone makes them uncomfortable, they can speak up without shame or fear. Most teachers shape children's futures with complete honesty and dedication. Therefore, it is unfair to tarnish the entire teaching community with the alleged or proven misconduct of a few individuals. However, this very reason increases teachers' professional conduct responsibilities even more. Teachers have constant contact with children, so they must be especially mindful of boundaries and professional decorum. Schools should have clear rules regarding situations such as personal messages, inappropriate comments, unnecessary physical contact, or private conversations. Teachers' behavior should reflect respect, equality, and security. School administrations should send a clear message that any form of sexual or inappropriate behavior toward children is unacceptable. However, "zero tolerance" should not mean taking action against anyone without investigation. It truly means taking every complaint seriously, following a fair process, ensuring the safety of the child, and taking appropriate action based on the investigation's findings.

An India-Pakistan War Test: How Far Would Saudi Arabia And Turkey Go?

The trilateral Mecca security pact between Saudi Arabia (KSA), Turkey, and Pakistan wasn't really a bolt from the blue. For months, there had been confluences between these three countries and Egypt, and the air was abuzz with a new regional security arrangement that was being worked out. This new arrangement is in addition to the bilateral Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) between the Saudis and Pakistan. The reaction in India to this new strategic realignment in West Asia has swung between two extremes. While some analysts see it as a very negative development with serious strategic implications for India's security, others have expressed deep scepticism about this arrangement working effectively, if at all. Both sides of the argument have made valid observations in support of their assessment of the Mecca Pact. But regardless of which assessment proves accurate, India cannot afford to ignore, much less dismiss, this realignment of two enemy countries (Pakistan and Turkey) with a third friendly country (Saudi Arabia); But nor does India need to get flustered over it. What India needs is a strategy that will not only counter the negative aspects of the Mecca alliance if it works on the ground but also improve its strategic space if the sceptics of the Mecca Pact prove correct. Unsteady Ground While the pact is an outcome of a breakdown of the security architecture that has prevailed in the region over the last 100 years, it is rather premature to imagine whether this alliance is laying the foundation on which a new regional security framework



will be built. To call the Mecca Pact an "Islamic NATO" or equate it with the Baghdad Pact (CENTO) is quite a stretch. Both those alliances were led by a dominant power, the US. There is no such power that provides the necessary ballast to the Mecca Pact. If anything, traditional rivalries between Turkey and Saudi Arabia haven't entirely been resolved. Just a few years ago, Erdogan was viciously twisting the knife into the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman (MBS) over the Khashoggi killing. That they subsequently papered over their differences means very little, because in this region, all alliances are temporary and can change virtually overnight. The third leg of the stool, Pakistan, is in it for the money, naturally. Hardly a new NATO - which, by the way, is in total disarray itself. A lot is being made about "collective deterrence against any act of aggression, and...any armed attack against any one of the three States shall be regarded as an attack against them all". But there is no clari-

ty about what this really means. While Article 5 of the NATO agreement defines how the collective defense will kick in, the Mecca Pact has kept the agreement secret. Is this to keep some wiggle room for the signatory countries to opt out of this collective defense clause? Or is the secrecy being kept because the obligations enjoined on each country in the event collective defense is invoked are different and could thus evoke sharp opposition and criticism? In other words, the Saudis, who were unable to defend themselves against Iranian or Houthi attacks, cannot realistically be expected to send in their forces for the defence of Pakistan. Speaking of Houthis, within a few hours of the Mecca Pact, the Houthis fired missiles on Saudi Arabia, and there wasn't even a squeak from the new and much-vaunted security partners of the Saudis. Perhaps Saudi obligation under the pact will be limited to giving money, diplomatic and political support to Pakistan to fight its own war. But what is expected of the

Pakistanis? So far, at least, they haven't really delivered on their commitments to Saudi Arabia. Also, why would Turkey, which is a member of NATO, need Pakistan and the Saudis to come to its aid in the event of an attack? A Reality Check While it can be argued that these three countries have militaries with different offensive and defensive capabilities, none of them has the capacity and capability required for out-of-area operations of the kind that the US possesses. Even a significant power like China would be hamstrung in conducting and sustaining operations outside its immediate neighbourhood. Given their current capabilities, for any of these countries to marshal troops to go to another country's aid and fight its wars is a bit far-fetched. It is also not clear if the Mecca Pact is a return to the kind of alliances that existed in the 19th and early 20th centuries, when a bunch of countries, mostly in Europe, would enter into wars on behalf of their alliance partners.

Charles Schwab opens tech capability centre in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: Charles Schwab, the US-based financial services major, made its India debut on Wednesday, August 19, with Schwab India in Hyderabad. The 345,000 sq ft technology capability centre will support Charles Schwab's US business, said the Times of India. The company plans to have a 2,000-strong workforce by the end of 2027 and would handle in-house the technology work it has been outsourcing. Telangana IT and industries minister D Sridhar Babu inaugurated the facility along with Charles Schwab leaders, including Christopher Wyse, managing director and chief corporate affairs officer. Sridhar Babu said Hyderabad was moving beyond shared services to build technology that powers global trading and brokerage. He said the city hosts nine of the world's top 10 brokerage and trading institutions, representing about USD 40 trillion in



assets under management, and more than 475 global capability centres. “Mumbai is India’s trading and brokerage capital, but Hyderabad is increasingly building the technology that powers trading and brokerage for the world,” he said. Wyse said the investment

would help Schwab serve 48 million account holders and 30,000 employees who depend on its technology platforms. The company plans to have a 2,000-strong workforce by the end of 2027 and would handle in-house the technology work it has been outsourcing.

INDIA'S L&T WINS DUBAI AL MAKTOUM AIRPORT PEOPLE MOVER ORDER



India's Larsen & Toubro (L&T), in consortium with Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI), on Thursday, August 20, secured a large order to design and build an Automated People Mover (APM) system for Phase 1 of Al Maktoum International Airport in Dubai. The project is part of the airport's multi-phase expansion and is being developed by Dubai Aviation City Corporation through Dubai Aviation Engineering Projects. Once fully developed, Al Maktoum International Airport is planned to handle up to 260 million passengers and 12 million tonnes of freight annually. L&T to deliver automated transport system Under the Design-and-Build contract, the MHI-L&T consortium will undertake the turnkey delivery of the APM system, covering its design, construction, supply, testing, commissioning and operational readiness. L&T will handle the design, procurement and integration

of key infrastructure and systems, including guideways, DC traction substations, power distribution, signalling and telecommunications. Its scope will also include onboard communication systems for vehicles, platform screen doors and depot equipment. Ramkumar S, Executive Vice President and Head of Transportation Infrastructure at L&T, said the project involves advanced technologies and multiple sys-

tem interfaces, highlighting the company's capability to execute complex integrated APM rail systems. He said the project would be delivered with a strong focus on safety and quality. Al Maktoum airport to replace DXB operations The first phase of Dubai's new Al Maktoum International Airport is scheduled for completion by 2032. Once operational, the mega-hub will gradually take over all flight operations from

Dubai International Airport (DXB), currently one of the world's busiest aviation hubs. In April 2024, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, approved the designs for the new passenger terminals at Al Maktoum International Airport. The expanded airport is planned to have five parallel runways and 400 aircraft gates, forming the cen-

trepreneur of Dubai's long-term aviation strategy. L&T strengthens Gulf transport presence L&T has experience in turnkey Design-Build and engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) projects across the railway and metro sectors. Its integrated rail systems portfolio includes projects associated with the Mumbai Metro, Dhaka Metro and Jakarta MRT networks. The company said rising investment in next-generation mobility, urban transit and sustainable transport infrastructure across the Gulf Cooperation Council is expected to create further opportunities in the regional railway and transit sector. The Al Maktoum International Airport contract adds to L&T's transport infrastructure portfolio in the Gulf and strengthens its position in the region's growing mobility sector. The first phase of the mega-hub is scheduled for completion by 2032 and will eventually replace DXB operations.

HCLTech report reveals telecom leaders identify AI as top revenue driver, but only 25% ready to scale

NOIDA, India, Aug 2026—HCLTech, a leading global technology company, in partnership with Mobile World Live, a global telecom industry destination, today unveiled findings from its Telecom Pulse Survey Report, highlighting an execution gap between telecom leaders' AI ambitions and their readiness to deploy AI-native, autonomous and cloud native services at scale. Based on insights from nearly 200 senior executives across network operators, MVNOs, communication service providers (CSPs) and OEMs worldwide, the survey reveals that while 60% of telecom leaders see AI as a key driver of future revenue, only 25% believe their organizations are ready to operationalize AI at scale, preventing the essential shift from a telco to an AI-native TechCo. Persistent challenges around legacy infrastructure, cloud native modernization and skills continue to slow progress for the industry to be prepared for an AI-driven future. The findings also underscore mounting pressure on traditional telecom business models. Nearly 70% of respondents agree that connectivity services are

increasingly commoditized, reinforcing the need for differentiated digital services and platform-led growth. However, innovation velocity remains constrained, with nearly 80% launching fewer than five new digital products or services in the past year, pointing to ongoing challenges in product engineering and time-to-market acceleration. Ecosystem collaboration emerged as a critical enabler, with nearly half of telecom leaders citing partnerships with hyperscalers, AI platform providers and software vendors as essential to accelerating innovation and monetization. Despite this shift, success metrics remain heavily skewed toward cost optimization, with operational efficiency continuing to dominate how AI and digital transformation outcomes are measured. "The telecom industry is at a defining moment as AI transforms networks into intelligent, platform-driven ecosystems and this research recognizes that connectivity alone is no longer sufficient to sustain growth," said Anil Ganjoo, Chief Growth Officer and Global Head of Telecom, Media and Technology at HCLTech.

VAYU Launches in India, Bringing Made-in-India Compressed Air Solutions to Growing Manufacturers

Hyderabad, August 20, 2026:

YAYU, a new air compressor brand created for ambitious manufacturers and growing businesses, today announced its launch in India with a portfolio of compressed air solutions designed to deliver dependable performance, operational simplicity and efficient ownership across diverse manufacturing requirements. The launch comes at a time when India's Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are playing an increasingly important role in the country's industrial growth story. According to the Economic Survey 2025-26, MSMEs contribute approximately 35.4% of India's manufacturing output, 48.58% of the country's exports and 31.1% of GDP, underscoring the scale and significance of the sector to India's economy. Built in India and designed around the operating realities of Indian manufacturing businesses, YAYU reflects a strong belief in the ambition and potential of this entrepreneurial ecosystem. The brand has been created to support manufacturers as they grow and evolve, with compressed air solutions engineered for real-world operating conditions, simple operation and responsive service support. Anvar Jay Varadaraj, Chief Operating Officer, Elgi Equipments,



said, "India's manufacturing story is ultimately a story of its entrepreneurs - the businesses that continue to invest, build capabilities, create employment and contribute to the country's growth. We have served this community for decades and have seen their needs evolve as their businesses grow. VAYU represents the next step in that journey, bringing dependable screw compressor technology, built in India around the realities of Indian manufacturing, to a broader base of businesses. Our ambition is to grow with these manufacturers in India and, over time, take VAYU to customers around the world." At launch, VAYU offers a 5-45 kW range of air compressors, available in fixed- and variable-speed configurations and designed for operating pressures ranging from 7 to 12.5 bar. The

portfolio is supported by a range of accessories, genuine spare parts, comprehensive warranty coverage and nationwide service support. Growing with India's Manufacturing: For decades, ELGI has served manufacturing businesses across India through its reciprocating compressor portfolio, building long-standing relationships with customers as their businesses and compressed air requirements have evolved. VAYU represents the next step in this engagement, bringing screw compressor technology to a broader base of manufacturing businesses seeking to upgrade their compressed air capabilities. As manufacturers expand production and adopt new technologies, their expectations from critical utilities such as compressed air are also changing.

ing. VAYU has been developed around this transition, providing solutions aligned with evolving production and operational requirements. Built Around the Realities of Manufacturing: Compressed air is a critical utility across manufacturing environments, where equipment reliability and continuity can directly influence productivity, customer commitments and business performance. The VAYU proposition is built around a simple understanding: manufacturers need more than compressed air. They need the confidence that production can continue smoothly, shift after shift. Rather than relying on a single differentiating feature, VAYU brings together dependable equipment, simple operation and maintenance, and accessible support throughout the ownership journey.

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance registers a 60.7% YoY growth in term plan business in Telangana in Q1-FY2027

Hyderabad, August 2026: The Company has registered a strong 60.7% year-on-year growth in Q1-FY2027 for the term plan (retail protection) business in Telangana. The Company covered 6,56,032 lives in the State as on March 31, 2026. The Company is also receiving strong demand in its savings business that includes linked, non-linked and annuity business in the State of Telangana. The Company's Assets under Management (AUM) stood at Rs. 11,708 crore as on March 31, 2026 in the State. Importantly, the Company reported a sum assured of Rs. 1,52,016 crore as on March 31, 2026 in the State and in the last 7 years the Company has paid total benefits worth Rs. 4,060 crore to its customers in the State of Telangana. The Board of Directors recently approved a proposal to rename the Company as 'ICICI Life Insurance Limited', subject to relevant approvals. As on March 31, 2026, the Company has 11 branches and 6,172 advisors along with 3,934 partner branches and 3,372 specified person in Telangana. Mr. Amish Banker, Chief Distribution Officer, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company Limited, said, "Telangana continues to be a strategically important mar-

ket for our Company and we are witnessing strong momentum across both urban and emerging centres in the State. Over the past few quarters, we have seen a clear shift in customer behaviour, with individuals increasingly prioritising financial protection, long-term savings and retirement planning as part of their overall financial goals. Our continued investments in distribution, digital capabilities, diversified products and customer engagement are helping us deepen our presence in the region. Our Company's strategy is to make it effortless for customers to plan and take control of their future. All our efforts are focused in this direction. Overall, our Company leverages artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics and digitalisation across the customers' entire life cycle. Notably, during Q1-FY2027, at the overall Company level, approximately 54% of our savings policies were issued on the same day, and about 58% of our insurance policies were issued using digital KYC. Importantly, 97% of our services are made via self-help or digital modes, enabling our customers to easily manage their policies in a few clicks.

ITC HOTELS SIGNS STORII ASSAGAO, EXPANDS PRESENCE IN GOA

New Delhi, 20 August 2026: ITC Hotels Limited today announced the signing of a management agreement for a 51 key hotel in Assagao, North Goa, under its fast-growing Storii by ITC Hotels brand. The hotel is envisioned as a distinctive hospitality offering inspired by the region's vibrant character attracting travellers to its dynamic culinary treasure, natural beauty, boutique retail experiences, and proximity to the state's celebrated beaches and attractions. Storii Assagao will feature well-appointed rooms and suites, an all-day dining restaurant and a range of dining, social and recreational experiences. The signing further strengthens ITC Hotels' presence in Goa across various brand and reinforces its strategy of expanding across high-potential leisure markets. Anil Chadha, Managing Director, ITC Hotels Limited, said 'Goa continues to be one of India's leading tourism markets and remains a key focus area for our leisure growth strategy. Assagao has emerged as an



attractive micro-market, driven by its distinctive character, strong visitor appeal, and evolving travel preferences. Storií Assagao will seamlessly blend the essence of the locale with the brand's focus on personalized service and memorable guest experiences. We are delighted to partner with Ananda Hospitality Services Private Limited on this exciting project."

Purshottam Sharma and Dilip Sharma, Partners at M/s Ananda Hospitality Services Private Limited, said "Assagao has steadily evolved into one of Goa's most sought-after hospitality destinations, attracting trav-

ellers looking for enjoyable and well-curated stays. We are pleased to collaborate with ITC Hotels and look forward to creating a hospitality offering that reflects the unique appeal of the region while delivering exceptional guest experiences."

The signing also marks a significant addition to ITC Hotels' growing presence in North Goa, a market that continues to benefit from strong tourism demand, improving connectivity, and increasing preference for experiential leisure travel. With its strategic location and proximity to key tourism hubs, its tree-lined avenues, charming neigh-

bourhoods, and evolving hospitality landscape, Stori Assagao is well-positioned to become a preferred choice for travellers exploring the region. With the enduring Namaste as the symbol of its brand experience and a distinguished legacy spanning over five decades, the business of ITC Hotels has been a pioneering force in shaping India's luxury and responsible hospitality landscape. Since its inception in 1975, the chain has consistently set new benchmarks in service excellence, culinary innovation, sustainable practices and the celebration of Indian culture. What began as a single hotel has grown into one of India's largest and most respected hospitality chains, with a presence that now extends across India, Sri Lanka and Nepal through a portfolio of 150+ properties and over 14,200 keys. The Company has seamlessly blended world-class hospitality with environmental stewardship, showcasing India's heritage while embracing the future through innovation, inclusivity and purpose-led growth.

Maruti Suzuki FRONX becomes the fastest SUV to clock 2 lakh exports from India in record time



New Delhi August 2026
Maruti Suzuki India Limited ("Maruti Suzuki") today announced that its popular SUV, FRONX, has crossed the milestone of 2 lakh exports in under 38 months becoming the fastest SUV from India to achieve this feat**.

Since the commencement of exports in June 2023, FRONX has witnessed a remarkable acceleration in global demand. While the Made-in-India SUV achieved its first lakh exports in under 25

months, it added the second lakh in around 13 months. Manufactured at Maruti Suzuki's Hansalpur facility in Gujarat, FRONX is being exported to nearly 90 countries, including Japan. Speaking on the milestone, Mr. Hisashi Takeuchi, Managing Director & CEO, Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Every vehicle exported by Maruti Suzuki carries the hard work and pride of our people. Together, these vehicles take a piece of Indian manufacturing to nearly 120

countries. FRONX has been a key contributor to Maruti Suzuki's success in exports. Since FY 24-25, it has been India's No. 1 exported passenger vehicle* and is now shipped to nearly 90 countries. After crossing the milestone of 1 lakh exports in record time, FRONX reached its second lakh significantly faster, underlining its growing demand in the international markets." He added, "Aligned with 'Make in India, Make for the World', Maruti Suzuki con-

tinues to showcase the prowess of India's manufacturing ecosystem. Sustained focus on exports has earned the Company the number one position in passenger vehicle exports from India*. Illustrating this leadership, all three of India's top exported passenger vehicles in Q1 FY 26-27* were from Maruti Suzuki. The growing export volumes year-on-year are a strong endorsement of the reliability and appeal of the Company's products across global markets."

EX-ZAMBIAN MINISTER KILLED IN SECURITY RAID ON OPPOSITION



A former Zambian minister was killed in last week's raid by security forces on a house linked to opposition leader Brian Mundubile a day after the presidential election, the authorities have said. A police spokesman said Mutotwe Kafwaya was fatally wounded by law enforcement officers during what officials have described as an exchange of fire in a security operation in the capital, Lusaka, on Friday. Eleven people were arrested in the raid, with the authorities accusing Mundubile's party, the NRPU, of being "involved in insurgency" and "militia activity" and storing "high-grade" weapons. Mundubile, who has since gone into hiding, rejected the allegations as "total fabrications". According to official results, incumbent President Hakainde Hichilema won a second five-year term with a 60% share of the vote. Mundubile, who trailed behind with 38%, plans to challenge the outcome in court after alleging the tallying process had been tampered with. Speaking about Kafwaya on Tuesday, the

opposition leader said he had had no information of his whereabouts after he had been shot during the raid, which he said took place at his house. The police confirmed Kafwaya's death late on Wednesday amid growing demands for information about him. They said the 49-year-old was killed in a shootout during the raid by a joint security task force, adding that they encountered "gunfire and resistance from unknown individuals, resulting in [them] returning fire". "In the process one unidentified male person was fatally wounded, and the firearm was recovered," the police said, adding that family members had subsequently identified him. Kafwaya first became a lawmaker in 2016 and was appointed by then-President Edgar Lungu as the for minister for works in 2018 and moved to the transport ministry the following year. He served there until 2021, when Lungu lost to Hichilema in the presidential election of that year. He continued serving as an opposition member of parliament.



■ At least 15 killed in Kyiv as Ukraine grapples with air defence shortages

Donald Trump vows tougher economic measures on Iran and supporting countries

Donald Trump has said he will launch tougher economic measures against Iran, as well as any country that helps or does business with it. The US president wrote in all capital letters on Truth Social that he was launching "the most crushing economic operation ever taken against any country", without providing further details or the names of any nation other than Iran. It comes after a 60-day ceasefire formally expired on Monday without any sign of a diplomatic settlement to the war the US and Israel began at the end of February. Tehran said Trump's threat would only bring further animosity. If realised, it would extend a campaign of economic pressure on Iran aimed at forcing it into submission. The US launched a wave of sanctions



on foreign banks and firms that do business with Iran in April when it became apparent that military action had not led to the overthrow of the regime in Tehran nor its surrender, as Trump had initially hoped. Conversely, since the start of the war, Iran has been able to stem the flow of marine traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, raising energy prices globally. Ahead of the US midterm elections

in November, Trump is facing pressure over how much the war is costing American consumers. The US president wrote on Wednesday evening that he was launching "economic D-Day" on Iran because it had failed to make a deal with the US. "ANY country that allows its financial institutions, businesses, airports, or government entities to provide any type of lifeline to Iran will itself face

TREMENDOUS Economic Consequences," Trump said. He did not specify what punishment countries might face. Trump continued: "Oil smuggling, swap lines, cash transfers, exchange houses, ship registries, front companies - it all needs to stop NOW. You know who you are." It comes a day after the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a US ally, announced it would be severing all financial and economic ties with Iran, following a new missile threat from the country. The UAE's defence ministry said it had detected two ballistic missiles launched from Iran targeting maritime traffic, both of which landed in the sea. Iranian entities have long used Dubai's financial system to transfer money through exchange houses and shell companies.

Australia 'outraged' after Israel decides not to open criminal investigation into killing of aid worker in Gaza



Australia's foreign minister has said she is "outraged" over an Israeli military decision not to launch a criminal investigation into the death of aid worker Zomi Frankcom, who was killed in an air strike in Gaza. Frankcom was an Australian aid worker with World Central Kitchen (WCK) who was killed with six other colleagues in an Israeli attack in April 2024. Foreign Minister Penny Wong said in a statement the decision "falls far short of the accountability we expect" and summoned the Israeli ambassador. After meeting Wong, Ambassador Hillel Newman defended the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and its investigation, saying "there was no criminal intention" and therefore "no criminal responsibility". Frankcom's family said in a statement on Thursday that they were "deeply disappointed" by the IDF's decision. "As a family, we do not believe this to be accurate, and we continue to call for an independent investigation," the statement said. Three British nationals, a Palestinian, a Polish national and a dual US-Canadian citizen were also killed in the attack. The UK has yet to comment on the Israeli decision. Speaking to reporters after meeting Newman, Wong said there were still many "unanswered questions", including why if the first strike on the convoy was "a catastrophic error", two further strikes followed,

just minutes apart. She also said the removal of two officers from their positions and the reprimanding of three after an initial probe was "insufficient accountability" for the death of seven people. Drone audio from the attack had still not been handed over despite requests from the Australian government, she said. In its statement on Wednesday, the IDF said the presence of an armed guard with the convoy had not been flagged with it before the convoy set off, and that he was falsely identified as a Hamas fighter. It also claimed the convoy had deviated from the route that had been coordinated with the military. Notwithstanding "serious failures" in the process that led to the killings, "the decisions of the commanders did not raise reasonable suspicion of criminal misconduct," the IDF said. In the same statement, the IDF also said it had also failed to find grounds for criminal investigation into the killing of four employees of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), who were killed in two separate attacks in November 2023 and February 2024. In her earlier statement, Wong said the Australian government had learned of Israel's decision late on Wednesday night, adding that the outcome was "especially insulting" as it occurred on World Humanitarian Day.

Founder of collapsed Chinese property giant Evergrande sentenced to life in prison

The founder of Evergrande, the property giant at the centre of China's housing market slump, has been sentenced to life in prison and had all of his personal property confiscated. Hui Ka Yan pleaded guilty in April to several charges, including embezzlement of assets and corporate bribery. Shenzhen Intermediate People's Court also fined his former companies a total of 15.82bn yuan (£1.73bn; \$2.35bn) over multiple crimes, including falsifying records and concealing debt. Hui's sentencing marks a key moment in the fallout from Evergrande's collapse, which shook China's property sector and hit investors and domestic banks hard. Hui and his businesses "seriously disrupted" the Chinese property market, resulting in significant economic losses, the court said. Other Evergrande executives, including Hui's two sons Xu Zhijian and Xu Tenghe, were also sentenced to jail terms ranging from 22 months to 18 years, according to state media. Once ranked Asia's



richest man, Hui has seen his wealth and influence dwindle as his company unravelled. Hui, also known as Xu Jiayin, rose from humble beginnings in rural China, where he was raised by his grandmother before venturing into property development and setting up Evergrande in 1996. He oversaw the company's rapid rise through an aggressive expansion programme funded with large amounts of borrowed money. Evergrande became China's biggest real estate developer, with a stock market valuation of more than \$50bn (£36.7bn). Hui

was once estimated to be Asia's richest person. The firm was dealt a huge blow when Beijing introduced measures in 2020 to control debt in the country's property sector. As the company struggled to meet interest payments on its debts it sold properties at huge discounts to stay afloat before collapsing in 2021. In April, the court heard that the company had taken millions of dollars in pre-sale funding from potential house buyers that were not used for construction. The money had instead been channelled to new property developments, resulting

in hundreds of unfinished projects. In March 2024, Hui was fined \$6.5m and banned from China's capital market for life for his company overstating its revenue by \$78bn. Evergrande's stock market valuation shrank by 99% before its shares were removed from the Hong Kong exchange in August 2025 after more than a decade and a half of trading. Evergrande's implosion has often been blamed for triggering a broader slump in China's property market that continues to weigh heavily on the economy. At its height, Evergrande was the biggest firm in the country's real estate industry, which made up about a third of China's gross domestic product at the time. The property market was a significant driver of growth and an important revenue source for local governments. The industry's ongoing problems have weighed heavily on the world's second largest economy as several other major developers faced financial woes.

Missing teen hiker found dead in Australian bush after eight-day search



The body of a woman has been found in Australian bushland, following an eight-day search for a Sydney teenager reported missing last Wednesday. Police said that while the body was yet to be formally identified, it was believed to be that of 18-year-old Lily Hooper. The confirmation came after the state premier told the New South Wales parliament that she had been found alive before later retracting the statement. The teenager left her home in Sydney to go walking in a nearby national park on 12 August. Her family reported her missing later that night, after she

failed to return home by 22:00. Her car was found in a car park at the bottom of a challenging trail in the Nattai National Park. Police said that the body was found in the Southern Highlands at approximately 11:30 local time on Thursday. Hooper's body had been found in dense vegetation and would likely have to be carried out on foot. There was initial confusion as to Hooper's condition, after New South Wales Premier Chris Minns told a parliamentary hearing that she had been found alive. Local media suggested that her family had also been informed that she was alive.



Giant whales move into Greenland waters as ice disappears

Belgian car salesman becomes prince after royal parentage confirmed

Belgium's Prince Laurent has legally recognised 26-year-old former car salesman Clément Vandenkerckhove as his son and heir. Vandenkerckhove, the result of a relationship between the royal and Belgian singer Wendy Van Wanten, was quietly brought into Prince Laurent's family at a town hall ceremony six months ago, although details have only just emerged. While he formally becomes a prince, he will not receive a royal allowance. The new prince has had several years to get used to the idea of having a royal father, and he said recently he was not yet sure he would begin using his father's name Saxe-Coburg. "I might want to do that, but I am proud of the name Vandenkerckhove," he told Het Nieuwsblad. "If I were to



sacrifice that family name, it would be a betrayal of everything my mother has done for me." He will not be part of Belgium's royal line of succession, unlike his half-sister Princess Louise and half-brothers Prince Aymeric and Prince Nicolas. Nor will he take part in public royal activities. Vandenkerckhove is already well known to Belgians, having been the

focus of a Flemish TV documentary last September, in which he described how he got to know his father. His father had been in a relationship with Wendy Van Wanten, whose real name is Iris Vandenkerckhove, before he went on to marry Princess Claire in 2003. During the VTM documentary, Clément described meeting the prince unexpectedly in a shopping

centre in 2013, without realising who he was. It was only when he was 16 that his mother revealed his father's identity. Four years later he plucked up the courage to ring him up, and after several more calls they met in person and eventually Prince Laurent suggested they take a DNA test. "We went to the hospital together and I remember him saying 'I'll go first so you're feeling at ease'," he told VTM. Then he received an email from the laboratory which told him of a 99.5% DNA match. Prince Laurent's DNA test is reminiscent of his father, former King Albert II, who had a test after a lengthy paternity battle. Albert admitted in 2020 that he had fathered a daughter during an affair and eventually recognised her as his own.

"TEST OF MIND, NOT CHESS":

Vidit Gujrathi On D Gukesh's World Championship Battle

Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi believes reigning world champion D Gukesh's title defence against Uzbek challenger Javokhir Sindarov will be a test of mental strength more than chess ability, with the Indian needing to put behind him a difficult run and rediscover the form that made 2024 an exceptional year. Gukesh has endured an inconsistent phase since his World Championship triumph, while Sindarov heads into the marquee clash in excellent form. Vidit, however, said a dip in results does not necessarily indicate a decline in a player's ability. "In chess, performances, if you are not Magnus Carlsen, come in stages. For example, 2024 was an exceptional year for Gukesh. Every tournament, he had the Midas touch. Whatever he played, he was winning," Vidit told PTI. He said form among



elite players is influenced by several factors beyond their chess strength. "Their strength is very high. A lot of things affect form - mindset, physical condition and pressure. Sport is about whether you can bring your best on that day." According to Vidit, Gukesh continues to work hard and has brought fresh ideas to his games but has struggled to produce the efficiency that characterised his rise to the world title. "Usually he would convert very well, but now he is

missing those wins. He is coming under time pressure a lot. He is working very hard. That's very clear from the games. But something is missing." Vidit, however, felt Gukesh could still return to his best, provided he can overcome the mental baggage of his recent results. "That doesn't mean that in the World Championship, he cannot go back to his 2024 version. It will require a lot of inner strength because when you don't do well, you struggle mentally."

INDIA-PAKISTAN PLAYERS SKIP HANDSHAKES BEFORE MATCH

The Indian men's hockey team swept past their arch-rivals Pakistan in emphatic fashion, beating them 5-3 in their final Pool D match of the FIH Hockey World Cup in Amstelveen, Netherlands, on Wednesday. However, the intense battle on the field did not stop the teams from exchanging pleasantries, as the players shared high-fives before the start of the match. While politics often threatens to overshadow India-Pakistan encounters, the clash in Amstelveen showcased a modern display of sportsmanship. After their respective national anthems were played, the two sets of players lined up and exchanged quick high-fives to show mutual respect, skipping the traditional pre-match handshakes. In the aftermath of



Operation Sindoor, the India and Pakistan cricket teams have refrained from shaking hands with each other. However, hockey does not appear to be following cricket's path, at

least for now. Even during the Sultan of Johor Cup last year, the two teams shook hands after their match. After full-time in Amstelveen, the India and Pakistan players did

shake hands, having skipped the customary gesture before the start of the match. As far as the action on the field is concerned, skipper Harmanpreet Singh and

striker Abhishek scored a brace each as India extended their decade-long unbeaten run over arch-rivals Pakistan with a 5-3 win. The defeat ended Pakistan's campaign in the tournament. Playing their first World Cup in eight years, Pakistan fought back after conceding three goals but India held their nerve to seal a memorable win in front of a packed 10,000-capacity Wagener Stadium. Captain Harmanpreet (5th, 21st) scored twice from penalty corners, while Abhishek (11th, 24th) struck two fine field goals and Hardik Singh (34th) converted a penalty stroke for India. Hannan Shahid (22nd, 46th) scored twice for Pakistan, with Sufyan Khan (24th) adding the other from a penalty corner.

INDIA STAR TOLD 'NOT TO PLAY IN IPL' IN BIG VERDICT: "DON'T CHANGE YOUR STRENGTH"

Manav Suthar left everyone impressed with a sensational bowling performance as India registered a commanding 165-run victory over Sri Lanka in the first Test of the two-match series in Galle on Wednesday. The 24-year-old spinner, playing only his second Test for India, picked up six wickets in the second innings to finish with a remarkable 10-wicket match haul. Having made his Test debut against Afghanistan in June, Suthar had already announced his arrival on the international stage with a five-wicket haul. He followed it up with another outstanding display in Galle, playing a key role in India's victory. With India taking a 1-0 lead in the two-match series, former India batter Cheteshwar Pujara urged Suthar to



remain focused on red-ball cricket rather than chasing an IPL contract. Pujara also appealed to the Indian team management to "preserve" the young spinner for the longest format of the game. "Try to preserve him. We have had this discussion in

the past that, yes, all the young players might want to play the shorter format, but India should be looking to preserve him for the Test format. Yes, he might want to play the IPL, but don't go there. I mean, yes, if he gets the opportunity to play the

IPL, that's fine, but don't change your strength," Pujara said on the Sony Sports Network. "I think he doesn't need to change his bowling much. Just when it comes to white-ball cricket, you need to have that flatter trajectory, and I don't mind

him playing in the IPL. If he plays in the IPL, that is fine, but don't change your strength," he added. Pujara further stated that Suthar does not need to alter his bowling action, as his natural ability and skill set are already helping him thrive in red-ball cricket. "For someone like Manav Suthar, who is fighting the ball, who is willing to go a little slower, when it comes to red-ball cricket, you don't need to change that. Don't change yourself just for the IPL. I can understand, but don't change your natural ability, which is to flight the ball," said Pujara. Speaking about Suthar's T20 credentials, the Rajasthan-born spinner has featured in five IPL matches and picked up two wickets.

FC Goa Drawn In Tough Group For AFC Challenge League

FC Goa were clubbed with Tajikistan in a tricky group in the AFC Challenge League 2026-27 after the draw was held in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday. After losing to FK Arkadag of Turkmenistan in the AFC Champions League 2 preliminary stage last Wednesday, FC Goa dropped to the group stage of the AFC Challenge League, Asia's third-tier men's club competition. Qadsia SC and Fortis FC finished third in the Kuwaiti Premier League 2025-26 and the Bangladesh Football League 2025-26 respectively, while FC Regar-TadAZ were the Tajikistan Cup 2025 win-



ners. The draw saw 20 teams divided into five groups of four - three in the West and two in the East. They will compete in a single round-robin centralised league format in the group stage from October 17 to 24, 2026. The Gauris will travel to Kuwait, where Qadsia SC will host all Group C matches. In the West, the

three group winners and the best ranked runners-up among all groups will qualify for the quarter-finals. In the East, the group winners and runners-up will make it to the last eight. The quarter-finals and semi-finals - both double-legged affairs - are set for March 3-18 and April 7-15, 2027, respectively, with the final slated for May 8.

Treesa Jolly-Gayatri Gopichand Enter World Championships Quarters

Indian women's doubles pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand stood one step away from a medal after reaching quarterfinals with a straight game win over Japan's seventh seeds Rin Iwanaga and Kie Nakanishi at the World Championships in New Delhi on Thursday. The Indian unseeded pair, which is on a comeback trail after Treesa recovered from an injury, dished out a dominating performance to outwit world No 7 Japanese Rin and Kie 21-16 21-12 in a lop-sided contest. Treesa and Gayatri, who were awarded the Arjuna Award for 2025, had made it to the All England Open semi-finals in back-to-back years in 2022 and 2023.



Manav Suthar Shares Details Of His Practice After Demolishing Sri Lanka In 1st Test

India's young left-arm spinner Manav Suthar revealed that he practised with the Kookaburra ball at home before the Sri Lanka series to adapt quickly to the conditions, and his preparation paid off in the first Test at the Galle International Stadium. Suthar produced a match-winning performance in only his second Test, claiming 10 wickets as India defeated Sri Lanka by 165 runs in the opening Test on Wednesday. The spinner returned figures of 6-55 in Sri Lanka's second innings to finish with match figures of 10-101 and help India take a 1-0 lead in the two-match series. Speaking in a video released by the BCCI, Suthar said he had focused on adapting to the Kookaburra ball following India's game against Afghanistan and had spent considerable time



practising with it both at home and in the nets. "I take cricket very seriously. My focus is to improve day to day when I go to practice. I practice as much as I can. My focus after the Afghanistan game was to adapt as soon as possible. I practised a lot with the Kookaburra ball. I practised in nets and at home. I was focusing on in-house games. It was very important," Suthar said. Suthar also credited

India's arrival in Sri Lanka 10 days before the Test for giving him valuable time to understand the conditions and get comfortable with the Kookaburra ball. "We came to Sri Lanka ten days ago, and it helped a lot in adapting to the environment and how to play with the Kookaburra ball. I get time to adapt. It has helped me a lot," he said. The 22-year-old said patience was another important factor on a Galle pitch that offered assistance to the bowlers. He revealed that he, Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav discussed the need to remain patient, knowing that new batters could find it difficult to settle.

Top Seeds Aryna Sabalenka, Alexander Zverev Stunned In Cincinnati Fourth Round



Top seeds Aryna Sabalenka and Alexander Zverev crashed out of the Cincinnati Masters in a matter of hours on a rainy Wednesday of fourth-round action. American Tommy Paul saved a match point on the way to a 4-6, 7-6 (8/6), 6-4 upset of Germany's Zverev. But the biggest shock came on the women's side where Czech Sara Bejlek, ranked 35th, stunned world number one Sabalenka 7-6 (9/7), 6-4 in a gritty match that finished up shortly after the clock ticked past midnight into Thursday morning. Former champion Sabalenka led by a break in the opening set and was up 5-1 in the tiebreaker before Bejlek roared back to pocket the set in 65 minutes. Bejlek broke the Belarusian three times in the second set, ral-

lying from 4-1 down and securing the win with a love game capped by an ace. "I lost my words - it feels incredible," Bejlek said after her first win over a top-10 player. "I was playing what I was feeling and not really thinking. I was trying not to be nervous and just play. I believed in myself no matter what," Bejlek, who won the Abu Dhabi hard court title in February as a qualifier, booked a quarter-final clash with American Madison Keys. It was yet another setback for Sabalenka as the start of the US Open looms on August 30. The four-time Grand Slam champion was ousted in the fourth round of the Toronto Masters last week, having lost in the same round at Wimbledon and in the quarter-finals at Roland Garros.

Mumbai Indians' New Post Sparks 'Hardik Pandya' Rumour Ahead Of IPL 2027

Ahead of the next season of the Indian Premier League, there has been a huge buzz regarding Hardik Pandya. Multiple reports have claimed that Mumbai Indians are looking to trade the player before IPL 2027. The all-rounder, who made his IPL debut for MI in 2015, left the franchise ahead of the 2022 season and joined Gujarat Titans. Hardik led GT to the title in their debut season and continued as captain for another year before MI reacquired his services through the transfer window. This time, Hardik was handed the responsibility of leading Mumbai Indians. However, the results did not go as expected, with Mumbai finishing at the bot-

tom of the IPL 2024 points table. The following season, MI reached Qualifier 2 before ending IPL 2026 in ninth place. Amid the ongoing rumours regarding Hardik's potential trade, Mumbai Indians took to social media to post some pictures of the player. Commenting on IPL transfers and trades, former India captain Sunil Gavaskar made a direct appeal. "...there's some speculation in the media about the possible switching of players from one franchise to another. There's, of course, still some time before that window closes. However, while the transfer of a player from one franchise to another is in the public domain, when a trade takes place,

the numbers are known only to the two franchises, the player and the BCCI," Sunil Gavaskar wrote in Mid-Day. "In such a situation, the other franchises don't know whether the salary cap that every franchise has for its squad was maintained or breached. That's why it's important for full transparency that the numbers are also made public." He added that full transparency would help maintain the high profile of the IPL. "The IPL is the greatest T20 league in the world and it's therefore crucial that full transparency is maintained so that there's no finger-pointing at it from those jealous of it," he wrote further. Ahead of the next season of the

Indian Premier League, there has been a huge buzz regarding Hardik Pandya. A single Mumbai Indians social media post has sent the IPL rumour mill into overdrive, reigniting speculation over whether Hardik Pandya will still be wearing the franchise's colours come the 2027 season. The Mumbai franchise shared a post captioned "Memo: Make it HP coded," accompanied by two images.



Viswanath & sons’ is a film that lived up to suriya sir’s faith: director Venky Atluri

Tamil star Suriya's latest film 'VISWANATH & SONS', directed by acclaimed filmmaker Venky Atluri, features Mamitha Baiju as the female lead. Presented by Srikara Studios and produced jointly by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya under Sithara Entertainments and Fortune Four Cinemas, the film hit theatres on August 14, 2026. With its natural humour, heartfelt emotions and relatable family drama, 'VISWANATH & SONS' is receiving an overwhelming response from audiences. The film has crossed the ₹150 crore gross mark worldwide within just four days and is continuing its successful run. In a recent interaction with the media, director Venky Atluri shared his happiness over the film's success and spoke about Suriya's faith in the story, the writing process, the film's art work, Trivikram Srinivas's reaction, Mamitha Baiju's casting and several other interesting aspects of the film.



What was Suriya sir's reaction when he first heard the story?

Suriya sir immediately liked the story. In fact, he was looking for a family-oriented film, and he had mentioned that to me. I already had this story ready, so I narrated it to him. He really connected with it. He felt that we should tell the story honestly without unnecessarily adding comedy or commercial elements. That is why

we were particularly careful with the climax. We also made sure that no character was compromised in the process. Suriya sir watched the film a few days before its release. He was very happy because what he had believed in was exactly what he saw on screen. I feel very happy that we could live up to the faith he placed in the story. You are being praised for having the strength of writing seen in Trivikram Srinivas's films. How do you feel about that comparison? Mani Ratnam sir and Trivikram sir are two of the biggest inspirations behind my decision to enter the film industry. So, being compared with Trivikram sir is a great honour for me. I also understand the responsibility that comes with such a compliment, and I will work even harder to live up to it. I particularly love Trivikram sir's 'Nuvvu Naaku Nachav'. The dialogues are entertaining and humorous, yet they convey profound truths about life. That film inspired me tremendously, and I enjoy writing in a similar space.

How did the story of 'VISWANATH & SONS' originate?

Initially, I wanted to write a story around a relationship involving a significant age difference. If a person reaches the age of 40 without getting married, there has to be a strong reason behind that decision. The story evolved around that idea.

‘Village Stars’ Movie Launched with Traditional Pooja Ceremony

A new beautiful entertainer is set to make its way onto the Telugu screen. The upcoming film 'Village Stars', being produced under the NSV Productions banner, was officially launched with a grand pooja ceremony at the Venkateswara Veeranjaneya Swamy Temple in

Venkatagiri. Actor Sameer attended the event as the chief guest and blessed the entire film team. Narendra and Lilly Ballu are playing the lead roles, while Srinivas, Syed Abzal, Vijay and others will be seen in key roles. The film is directed by A. Narendra, with the story penned by Nagoor NGR.



Grand Press Meet Held for Unique Political Entertainer Dharmasthala Niyojakavargam



The film 'Dharmasthala Niyojakavargam' is set for a worldwide grand theatrical release on September 4. Produced under the banner of Moving Dreams India Private Limited, 'Dharmasthala Niyojakavargam' stars Suman, Saikumar, Nataraj, Varun Sandesh,

Vithika Sheru and others in key roles. Directed by Jai Jnana Prabha Thota and produced by Merum Bhaskar, this political entertainer is scheduled for a worldwide grand theatrical release on September 4. The film will be released across the Telugu states through PVR Cinemas Distribution.

Cult Producer SKN Launches Teaser for 'Missing Meghana'



Cult Producer SKN Launches Teaser for 'Missing Meghana' The teaser for the upcoming film 'Missing Meghana', produced by Panchumarthi Naresh Babu under the banners of First Copy Movies and KD & Co and directed by Vachaspathi, was grandly launched by cult producer SKN. The film stars Ram Karthik, Ammu Abhirami, Vaidika Senjaliya, and Ankit Koyya in the lead roles, alongside Goparaju Ramana, Vempa Kasi, Koushik,

Mahipal, Ruchitha, Nalini, Srinivas, Azeem, and Pandu in pivotal roles. Recently, the film's first look and title motion poster were unveiled by sensational director V. V. Vinayak, while the first single, 'Pilla Pilla Pilla', was launched by legendary producer Suresh Babu. Now, producer SKN has officially released the film's teaser. The cinematography is handled by Chota K. Naidu's contemporary Sam K. Naidu, with music composed by R. R. Dhruvan.

“Killer” release date announcement glimpse raises expectations for the film



Starring Jyoti Poorvaj and Poorvaaj in the lead roles, "Killer/KillR" is a sensational sci-fi thriller. Manish Gilada, Chandrakanth Kollu, Vishal Raj, Archana Ananth, and Gautham Chakradhar Koppishetti play other important roles. Produced by Poorvaaj and Padmanabha Reddy A. under the Think Cinema and AU & I Studios banners, with the blessings of Dhyanam Nannagaru, the film is presented by Urveesh Poorvaj. Poorvaj is directing the movie. Today, the makers officially announced the release date of "Killer." The film is set to have a worldwide grand theatrical release on October 17, on the auspicious occasion of

Vijayadashami. The release date announcement glimpse of "Killer" is intriguing from beginning to end and has further increased curiosity around the film. According to the glimpse, on October 17, the day the film releases, aliens make contact with Dr. Poorvaaj, one of India's greatest scientists. The alien informs him that they are sending a spaceship to Earth and asks him to convey the message to others, stating that they intend to save humanity. "Our future is that alien's past." Why did the alien from another timeline choose to contact Dr. Poorvaj? Why does it want to send a spaceship to Earth? What threat is humanity facing? What kind of help is the alien planning to provide?

I am very happy to play the role of Ravi Teja's daughter in 'Irumudi'. The audience will definitely love the film: Baby Nakshatra

Mass Maharaja Ravi Teja's most awaited movie 'Irumudi'. Priya Bhavani Shankar is playing the heroine. Directed by Shiva Nirvana and produced by Mythri Movie Makers, this movie has already raised huge expectations with its glimpses, trailer and songs. The movie, which is going to hit the theaters on August 21, is going to provide the audience with a different family entertainer experience with emotions and action. On this occasion, Baby Nakshatra, who played a key role in the movie, shared the features of the movie at a press conference. -My name is Nakshatra. I am from Kerala. I am studying in the seventh grade. So far, I have done six films in Kannada, Malayalam, and Tamil languages.



What will your role be like in 'Irumudi'?

-My character's name in this is Manikantha. I am going to be seen as Ravi Teja's daughter. Priya Madam is playing the role of my mother. Both Ravi Teja and Priya Madam are very friendly with me. I have dubbed for this film myself. You worked with big heroes like Prithviraj garu, Shivaraj Kumar garu, and Ravi Teja garu at a young age, right? How does it feel? -I am very happy. I would like to thank my mother on this occasion. She supports me a lot.

How do you balance movies and studies?

-My teachers are especially supportive of me. I am able to make films only with the support of my parents and teachers.

ANAND DEVERAKONDA & VAISHNAVI CHAITANYA’S EPIC – FIRST SEMESTER UNVEILS SOULFUL THIRD SINGLE ‘MANASA VACHA’



The makers of the much-awaited youthful romantic entertainer EPIC – FIRST SEMESTER have unveiled the film's third single, 'Manasa Vacha', a soulful musical piece that beautifully captures the emotions of love and longing. Composed by the immensely talented Hesham Abdul Wahab, 'Manasa Vacha' comes alive through the deeply soulful voices of legendary singers K. S. Chithra and S. P. Charan. Their expressive vocals, combined with Hesham's evocative composition, make the song a truly memorable musical experience. Penned by Sri Harsha Emani, the song beautiful-

ly conveys the emotions of the lead pair, portrayed by Anand Deverakonda and Vaishnavi Chaitanya. The visuals complement the music with an emotional and soulful journey, showcasing the depth of their relationship and the feelings that unfold along the way. Directed by Aditya Haasan, EPIC – FIRST SEMESTER is produced by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya under Sithara Entertainments and Fortune Four Cinemas, presented by Srikara Studios, with music by Hesham Abdul Wahab. EPIC – FIRST SEMESTER is set to hit theatres worldwide on September 11, 2026.

